

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.     A method of authenticating a user attempting to access a portable  
2           computing device comprising:  
3           causing a sequence of images to be shown on a display;  
4           accepting an input selection from the user indicating that a currently  
5           displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of the  
6           user's password, the user's password being known by the portable computing  
7           device;  
8           correlating the input selection to the currently displayed image; and  
9           allowing access to the portable computing device when the input selection  
10          and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion of the  
11          user's password.

1           2.     The method of claim 1, wherein the password comprises a plurality of  
2           portions, and further comprising repeating the causing, accepting and correlating  
3           for each of the plurality of password portions, and allowing access to the portable  
4           computing device when all input selections correlated to displayed images  
5           temporally correspond to the password.

1           3.     The method of claim 1, wherein causing the sequence of images to be  
2           shown on a display comprises sending the sequence of images over a wireless  
3           link to a computing system including the display.

1           4.     The method of claim 1, further comprising setting the user password in  
2           the portable computing device prior to causing the sequence of images to be  
3           shown on the display.

1           5. The method of claim 1, wherein each image of the sequence of images  
2 comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols comprising at least one of  
3 alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports team logos, company  
4 logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each password portion  
5 comprises at least one symbol.

1           6. The method of claim 1, further comprising causing the display of visual  
2 feedback to the user when a portion of the user's password is correctly selected.

1           7. The method of claim 1, wherein the display is part of a computing  
2 system un-trusted by the user.

1           8. The method of claim 7, further comprising establishing an  
2 authenticated connection from the portable computing device to the un-trusted  
3 computing system including the display prior to causing the sequence of images  
4 to be shown on the display.

1           9. An article comprising: a storage medium having a plurality of machine  
2 readable instructions, wherein when the instructions are executed by a  
3 processor, the instructions provide for authenticating a user attempting to access  
4 a portable computing device by

5           causing a sequence of images to be shown on a display;  
6           accepting an input selection from the user indicating that a currently  
7 displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of the  
8 user's password, the user's password being known by the portable computing  
9 device;

10          correlating the input selection to the currently displayed image; and  
11          allowing access to the portable computing device when the input selection  
12 and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion of the  
13 user's password.

1           10. The article of claim 9, wherein the password comprises a plurality of  
2 portions, and further comprising instructions for repeating the causing, accepting  
3 and correlating for each of the plurality of password portions, and instructions for  
4 allowing access to the portable computing device when all input selections  
5 correlated to displayed images temporally correspond to the password.  
6

1           11. The article of claim 9, wherein instructions for causing the sequence  
2 of images to be shown on a display comprises instructions for sending the  
3 sequence of images over a wireless link to a computing system including the  
4 display.  
5

1           12. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for setting the  
2 user password in the portable computing device prior to causing the sequence of  
3 images to be shown on the display.  
4

1           13. The article of claim 9, wherein each image of the sequence of images  
2 comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols comprising at least one of  
3 alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports team logos, company  
4 logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each password portion  
5 comprises at least one symbol.  
6

1           14. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for causing the  
2 display of visual feedback to the user when a portion of the user's password is  
3 correctly selected.  
4

1           15. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for establishing  
2 an authenticated connection from the portable computing device to an un-trusted  
3 computing system including the display prior to causing the sequence of images  
4 to be shown on the display.  
5

1           16. A portable computing device comprising:

2 a memory to store instructions and data;  
3 a processor to execute the instructions obtained from the memory to  
4 cause a sequence of images to be shown on a display of an un-trusted  
5 computing system, to accept an input selection from a user indicating that a  
6 currently displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of  
7 the user's password, the user's password being known by the portable  
8 computing device, to correlate the input selection to the currently displayed  
9 image; and to allow access to the portable computing device when the input  
10 selection and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion  
11 of the user's password.

12  
1 17. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the portable  
2 computing device comprises a wireless communications module for sending the  
3 sequence of images to be shown on the display over a wireless link to the un-  
4 trusted computing system.

5  
1 18. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein each image of  
2 the sequence of images comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols  
3 comprising at least one of alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports  
4 team logos, company logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each  
5 password portion comprises at least one symbol.

6  
1 19. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the memory  
2 further comprises instructions to establish an authenticated connection from the  
3 portable computing device to the un-trusted computing system prior to causing  
4 the sequence of images to be shown on the display.

5  
1 20. The portable computing device of claim 16, further comprising a  
2 button for entering the input selection by the user, the button indicating one of  
3 activation and non-activation.

- 1           21. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the memory
- 2   stores the user's password and the sequence of images.